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16 September 1961



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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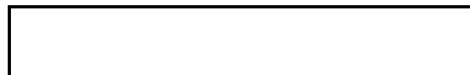
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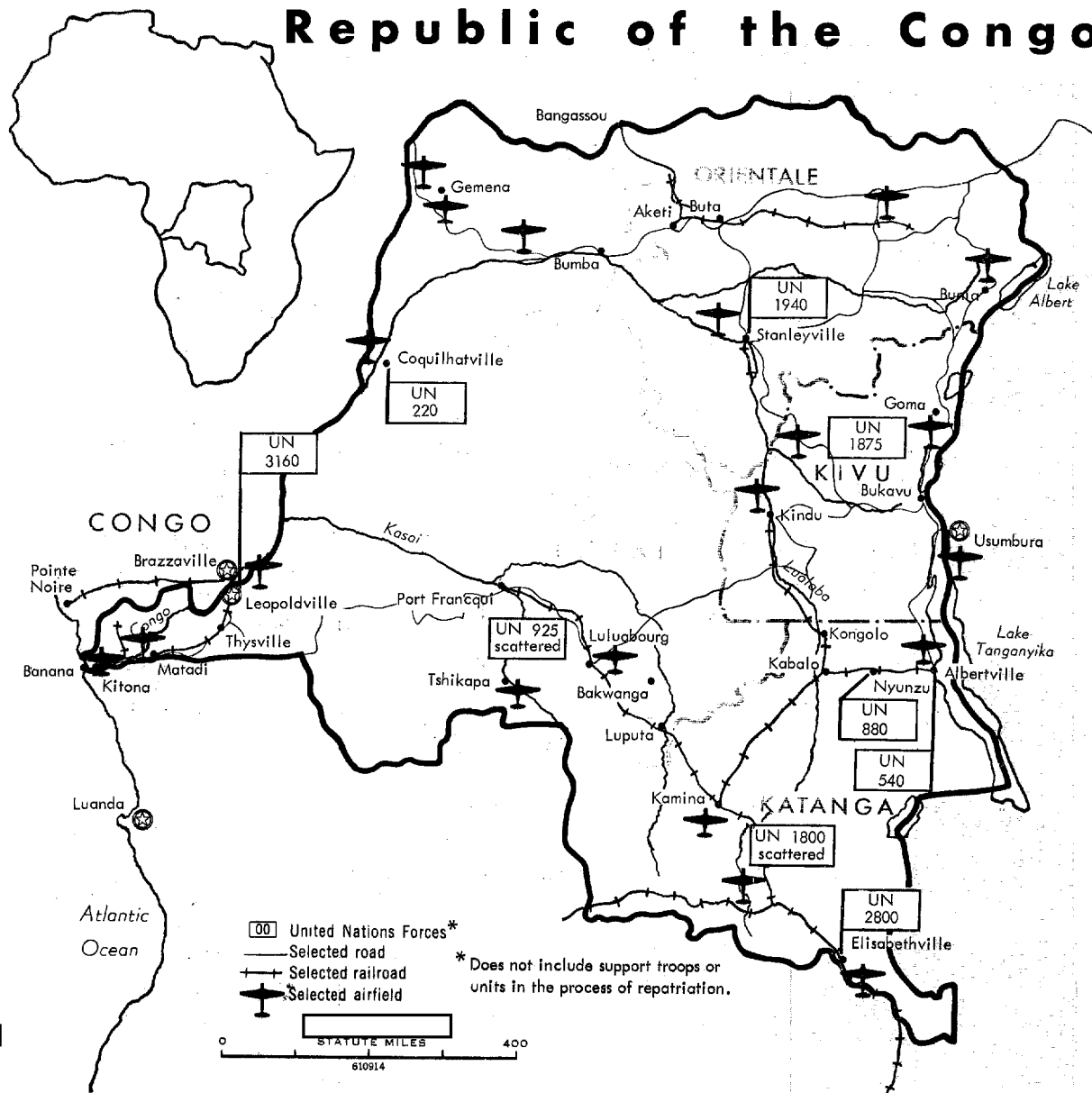


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*Congo: Attacks on UN forces in Katanga continued through 15 September. The US Consulate in Elisabethville reported yesterday evening, however, that UN officials there, while seriously concerned about the Irish company still under heavy attack at Jadotville, believed that the situations in Elisabethville and Kamina were "in hand" and that the Katangan fighting would "slacken." UN authorities planned to airlift two companies of Swedish troops from Leopoldville to Kamina yesterday, and early additional UN reinforcements were also expected in Elisabethville. *No*

Hammarskjold, in conversation with US Ambassador Gullion in Leopoldville yesterday, was optimistic regarding the possibility of a cease-fire in Katanga, and said that Katangan Vice President Kibwe had promised to help arrange a meeting between Tshombé and UN representative O'Brien. Hammarskjold said there was no question of the UN giving up positions it now holds or of renouncing its mission; he added that if a cease-fire could not be negotiated, the UN military would take the "initiative," a step he said it had avoided doing thus far in order to minimize bloodshed and destruction. In Elisabethville, O'Brien hoped to have a meeting with Tshombé yesterday evening; as of 0500 EDT this morning it was not known whether this meeting took place. Although both Tshombé and O'Brien are believed to be anxious for a cease-fire, neither has appeared willing to abandon his political objectives.

The UN has recently attempted to build up the authority of Kibwe, who had announced on Elisabethville radio on 14 September that he had assumed control of the Katangan forces "because Tshombé is unable to carry out his functions." Cease-fire appeals by Kibwe and O'Brien went ignored, however, and Tshombé yesterday continued his efforts to whip up popular support over "Radio Free Katanga." Katangan armed forces reportedly have been reinforced by tribal warriors from the bush.

According to the American Consulate in Elisabethville, UN officials there have largely blamed local Europeans, especially

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Belgians, for the failure of their plan to secure Katanga for Premier Adoula. The consulate described Tshombé's white allies as increasingly effective as snipers, troop commanders, and drivers of armored vehicles. Local Europeans-- apparently led by the Belgian consul general--are regarded by the consulate as even more emotional than UN officials. The consulate has characterized the Belgians as threatening anyone not supporting them, and reports the consulate has been under heavy pressure to join other Western missions in a denunciation of UN "atrocities."

Hammarskjöld has canceled a press conference which was to have been held shortly after his arrival in Leopoldville on 13 September. His statements to foreign diplomats, in New York and Leopoldville, have cited various bases for the UN action in Katanga. The British ambassador in Leopoldville, in a 14 September meeting with Hammarskjöld, advised him that if the UN was not able to justify its actions, Britain would reconsider its financial support of the UN operation.

The US Embassy in Leopoldville has received unconfirmed reports that a military revolt has broken out at Inongo, where a Congo Army battalion is stationed. The embassy adds that isolated tribal clashes occurred in Leopoldville on the night of 13-14 September, and that politically conscious youth groups had become more active.

Foreign reaction to the events in Katanga has been strongest in Western Europe, where criticism of the UN has been intense both in official and unofficial circles. In a conversation with Ambassador MacArthur, Belgian Foreign Minister Spaak-- in a "cold and bitter mood"--denounced Hammarskjöld on 14 September as a "liar" who "could not be trusted." Spaak said that if the Congolese Government closes Brussels' Congo mission, Belgium will terminate all economic and technical aid to the Congo and withdraw all its technicians.

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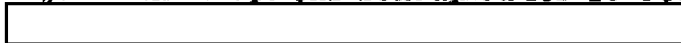
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*Turkey: The ruling junta's prompt action in commuting to life terms most of the court-imposed death sentences on leading figures of the Menderes regime overthrown last year will reduce but not eliminate the possibility of angry popular outbreaks in protest against the court verdicts announced yesterday. The 22-man Committee of National Union approved the death sentences imposed on Menderes, former Foreign Minister Zorlu, and former Finance Minister Polatkan, but took much of the sting out of this decision by commuting the sentences imposed on former President Bayar, ten other leaders of the Democratic Party, and former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Erdelhun. The CNU, in anticipation of adverse reactions to the court verdicts and aware of the substantial discontent in the country, has its military and security forces on alert to put down any disorders; it also plans to continue martial law and restrictions on free speech at least until after the elections scheduled for 15 October.

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Afghanistan-Pakistan-USSR: The Afghan economy faces a critical shortage of petroleum products as a result of the closure of the border to shipments crossing or coming from

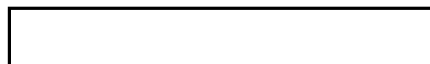
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Pakistan and the depletion of Afghan stocks by recent interruptions of Soviet shipments. Soviet deliveries continue to lag behind schedule. Afghanistan imported about 20 percent of its requirements from Pakistan, and transportation difficulties probably preclude any rapid expansion of Kabul's small imports from Iran. The shortage will probably force sharp curtailment of Afghan trucking, which forms the backbone of the country's transportation system.

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Bolivia: Both houses of Congress on 15 September voted unanimously to reject the resignation of Vice President Juan Lechin. The US ambassador believes Lechin's resignation, proffered on 14 September in response to accusations that Lechin was involved in the cocaine traffic, may have been a bid for demonstrations of public support for Lechin. His left wing of the government party has been embroiled in an internal crisis since the government's crackdown on Communist labor leaders last June.

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Colombia: Public disorders continue to accompany the strike of air-transport workers which occasioned rioting in Bogota on 31 August and 1 September. On 13 September there were street demonstrations in Bogota; the strikers began a sit-down strike in the congressional chambers and had to be forcibly ejected by police after two days; and bank workers began a wildcat strike, apparently hoping to spread the violence. President Lleras, who has declared both strikes illegal, has accused Communist and other extremist opposition elements of exploiting labor difficulties to foment social and political unrest and has indicated the government's determination to take effective countermeasures. Government security forces, which are believed capable of containing the disturbances, have taken special measures to protect government buildings in the capital.

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Bolivian Vice President's Resignation Rejected

The American Embassy notes that Lechin's personal political problems have been increased by the "Triangular Plan," under which Bolivia's tin mines are to be rehabilitated with help from the US and West German governments and from the Inter-American Development Bank. The Bolivian Government signed an agreement launching the plan on 31 August. Lechin is undecided as to what line to take on the plan. He has wavered between mild support and opposition to it but has sought especially to avoid responsibility, even failing to attend the signing ceremony. In addition Lechin's left wing of the governing Nationalist Revolutionary Movement recently suffered defeats both in congress and in an important union election. US Ambassador Stephansky believes that Lechin may feel it useful to foster a demonstration of support as a prelude to his possible departure for an extended stay in Europe.

Former President Siles is said to have commented last June that he believed Lechin's only interest had become the regaining of his popularity and that Lechin was exhibiting none of his old political and labor convictions.

Lechin, now 50 years old, is the head of Bolivia's national labor confederation and has been the country's most important labor leader for almost 20 years. He was at one time particularly close to Bolivia's Trotskyites and has absorbed considerable Marxist terminology, apparently from this association. However, he was never reported to have joined the Communist party. [REDACTED]

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Labor Unrest in Colombia

Colombia in recent weeks has faced considerable labor unrest accompanied by sporadic violence, particularly in Bogota and Cali, another major industrial center. Although union grievances have centered largely around bona fide economic and jurisdictional disputes, Communists and leftist opposition groups have apparently been prompt in encouraging the violent tactics of labor leaders.

The air transport workers' strike, which began on 18 August, won student support on 31 August when police pursued strikers into the grounds of the autonomous National University--in violation of standing regulations. The resulting melee produced several casualties. On the following day, students and workers, under the instigation of Communists and leftist youth organizations, launched a large protest demonstration in Bogota. Police broke it up only after widespread damage to public buildings and attacks on US installations.

The continuance and spread of labor violence could intensify the serious political dissension which has plagued President Lleras' national front government of Liberals and Conservatives. The Conservative party has long been divided into two factions, one of which is not participating in the executive branch of the government and is becoming increasingly critical of Lleras' administration of the national front. On the other hand, Lleras' own Liberal party has been split by the minority Liberal Revolutionary Movement (MRL), which is under strong leftist influence and is openly opposed to the national front principle. This principle involves alternation of the presidency and parity in all appointive and elective offices between Liberals and Conservatives for a 16-year period ending in 1974. The MRL may have supported the recent labor unrest in the capital, and the followers of former dictator Rojas Pinilla as well as Communists were probably involved to some extent. These political groups have the common objective of undermining and eventually ousting the national front regime, although the MRL has not previously espoused violence to achieve this goal. [REDACTED]

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